

Message Text

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70

ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 PC-10 USIA-15 IO-14 DODE-00 AGR-20

INT-08 COME-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 EB-11

SWF-02 DRC-01 /162 W

----- 057743

R 221715Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY DAKAR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6284

INFO AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY LOME

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AFDROUGHT

EO 11652N/A

SUBJ: REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION COTONOU-GAO ROUTE

REF: A) STATE 040018 B) BAMAKO 0624 C) DAKAR 1434

1. DESPITE RESERVATIONS EXPRESSED PRARA FOUR REF A, ABOUT POLITICAL FEASIBILITY OF USING COTONOU-NIAMEY-GAO ROAD ROUTE FOR RESUPPLY SIXTH REGION MALI, IT NOW ESTABLISHED THAT RECENT ACQUISITION OF DE SOTO TRUCKS ADDS NOTHING TO GOM CAPABILITY OF DELIVERING FOOD TO REGION KREF C). THEREFORE, AND IN VIEW MIN DEFENSE DOUKARA'S STATEMENT (REF B), THAT BOTH A FORTY-FIVE DAY AND A FOUR MONTH US AIRLIFT TO SOLVE PRESENT TRANSPORTATION DIFFICULTIES SHOULD NOW BE ANTICIPATED, RECONSIDERATION OF THE COTONOU-NIAMEY-GAO ROUTE APPEARS ONLY ALTERNATIVE TO ACCEPTANCE VIRTUAL CERTAINTY OF REPEAT PERFORMANCE OF LAST YEAR'S INCREDIBLY EXPENSIVE AIRLIFT.

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2. BELIEVE IT POSSIBLE TO MOVE SMALL PART OF MALI ALLOCATION-

PROBABLY NOT EXCEEDING 5,000 MT - VIA THIS MEANS, BEFORE ADVENT OF RAINS. HOWEVER, THIS AMOUNT WOULD EQUAL THAT CARRIED BY USAF IN 1973. PRINCIPAL CONSIDERATIONS WOULD APPEAR TO BE (A) CONDITION OF ROAD OVERALL AND ITS ABILITY TO SUSTAIN TRUCKS OF MODERATE DISPLACEMENT, SAY EIGHT TO TEN TONS; (B) TRANSITING RIGHTS- WOULD COUNTRIES BEING TRANSITED, VIZ. DAHOMEY AND NIGER, BE WILLING TO ALLOW SUCH TRAFFIC TO TRAVERSE THEIR TERRITORIES EN ROUTE TO FINAL DESTINATION AT GAO, MALI?; (C) WILLINGNESS/ABILITY OF LOCAL FORWARDING AGENTS/TRANSPORTERS TO UNDERTAKE OPERATION OF THAT COMPLEXITY AND MAGNITUDE; AND (D) AVAILABILITY OF FUEL IN THE COUNTRIES TRANSITED AND IN MALI FOR TRUCKS' RETURN JOURNEY TO COTONOU (THOUGH PRESUMABLY THIS THEORETICAL DIFFICULTY MIGHT BE OVERCOME BY INCLUSION IN EACH CONVOY OF TANKER TRUCKS). IT IS ASSUMED THAT POL FOR SUCH A CONTINGENCY IS AVAILABLE IN THE REQUIRED QUANTITY AT ABIDJAN, BUT THIS SHOULD OF COURSE ALSO BE ESTABLISHED.

3. BEARING IN MIND HEAVY EXPENDITURE INCURRED BY LAST YEAR'S AIRLIFT, AND WHILE PROPOSED ROUTE ENVISAGES POSSIBILITY OF EXPEDITING UP TO 5,000 MT FOOD-GRAINS FOR A SMALL FRACTION OF THE COST, WE REQUEST A QUICK REASIBILITY STUDY BY KNOWLEDGEABLE AID REP OR TEAM. BELIEVE SUCH A STUDY COULD BE UNDERTAKEN AND COMPLETED IN SEVEN TO TEN DAYS. PROVIDED FEASIBILITY CAN BE ESTABLISHED AND PRECISE MODALITIES SPELLED OUT, EXPECT PROBABLE COST TRANSPORTING COMMODITIES (OFF-LOADED UNDER LINER TERMS AT COTONOU) TO MALI'S SIXTH REGION TO BE IN NEIGHBORHOOD OF US DOLS EIGHTY PER TON, OR ABOUT ONE-TENTH COST OF AIR-LIFTING THEM. AID/W AND ADDRESSEES' SERIOUS CONSIDERATION OF THIS PROPOSAL URGENTLY SOLICITED. DECON 12/30/74
AGGREY

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Message Attributes

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